



City of New Albany, Indiana

DOUGLAS B. ENGLAND

Mayor

226456

18 January 2010

Mr. Daniel R. Elliott III
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: AB-55 (Sub. No. 698X)
AB 295 (Sub-No. 7X)

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Office of Proceedings

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Public Record

Via United States Postal Service (original) and email (.pdf)

Chairman Elliott:

The City of New Albany is in a unique position since the City will be impacted whether or not the discontinuance of service along the Hoosier Subdivision line of CSX Transportation Co. proceeds. In the event that service remains as it presently is, the City will have to continue to deal with freight trains disrupting traffic throughout the City; if service is discontinued as planned, the City will have a new 40-acre industrial park that abuts the rail line but will not be able to market rail service to prospective occupants of the industrial park, harming the City's efforts at economic development. If service is discontinued the City can expect to see more truck traffic on local urban streets and highways, adding congestion and adversely impacting the local climate by adding additional greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

This line runs north from the Ohio River through the heart of New Albany's central city neighborhoods using at-grade service on right-of-way that is shared with cars, trucks, transit and school buses, as well as emergency vehicles. The line serves a number of industrial parks and Indiana University Southeast on the north side of the City before leaving the City's planning jurisdiction on its way to Mitchell, Indiana, and beyond.

New Albany is currently completing preliminary work to develop a 40-acre industrial park on Grantline Road, north of Indiana University Southeast. This industrial park represents the first new industrial ground development in nearly 15 years and is critically important to job creation CSX in New Albany and Floyd County. The City has recruited Kemper Foods International as

the first tenant of the industrial park who will bring up to 600 jobs to the community. Kemper Foods International might be in a position in the future to need a rail link for delivery of raw materials as it is similar to a General Mills - Pillsbury in New Albany industry that currently uses rail for deliveries and employs 500 people.

For much of its length, this rail line parallels Grantline Road in New Albany and indeed it crosses Grantline Road inside the City about a mile south of Interstate 265 and again north of the City at a place locals refer to as 'Six Mile Switch', owing to its distance from the Courthouse. Grantline Road is a state highway, known as State Road 111, and under the authority of the Indiana Department of Transportation. The road varies from a two-lane urban corridor, a two lane rural configuration (no breakdown lanes and ditches alongside the pavement) to five lanes near Interstate 265 near Indiana University Southeast. A series of hills both in- and out-side the city, as well as streets intersecting the road at oblique angles make Grantline Road difficult to navigate safely in the best weather conditions. Increasing truck freight traffic along this corridor, when alternate modes of transportation are available, is a concern for the City both in terms of safety, efficiency, and environmental quality.

The Indiana Department of Transportation had planned to construct a highway overpass where the rail line crosses Grantline Road (State Road 111), but has abandoned that project.

In the mid-1990s, CSX Corp. used this line to move freight during the Mississippi River floods. New Albany experienced unexplained and unreasonable delays as long freight trains stopped for long periods on City streets dividing the community into eastern and western halves. The City recognizes that some of these delays may have been out of CSX's control, as it does not own the rail bridge over the Ohio and therefore had surrender right-of-way to the rail line owner (Norfolk-Southern, Inc.). Nonetheless, emergency responders had to carefully plan routes to provide emergency services when these irregularly scheduled trains were blocking streets, or had to contact CSX to get the trains moved. Commuters had no such option and complained frequently, and angrily, to City Hall. Our efforts to seek a reasonable solution to this problem seemingly fell on deaf ears. The City acknowledges that this volume of traffic is no longer present on this line, but is deeply concerned about its return and the possible adverse effects such traffic would again cause to the City and the convenience of our citizens as well as the commerce of our businesses and industries.

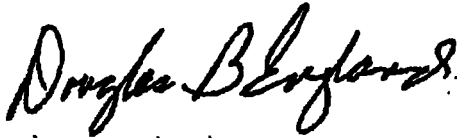
Finally, the City recognizes that this line passes literally hundreds of homes in the City's central city neighborhoods and the workplaces, schools, and the houses of worship of many thousands of Hoosiers. The return of frequent freight rail service to this line could adversely affect this community in the event of a catastrophic accident on this line. The cost of preparing for such a catastrophe - let alone responding to one and the aftermath of one - is beyond this City in the current fiscal environment.

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In conclusion, the City of New Albany prefers the best of both worlds and recommends the curtailment of CSX traffic north of 'Six Mile Switch' and maintenance of local freight rail service inside the city of New Albany to a point at or near 'Six Mile Switch'.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at this office.

THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Douglas B. England". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honorable Douglas B. England, Mayor

cc: Hon. Baron Hill, IN-9

Mr. Dave Geraci, Manager, Network Rationalization, CSX Corp. (via email)

Mr. Mike V. Kemper, President, Kemper Foods International

Mr. Ted Iverson, General Mills - Pillsbury, New Albany